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The tumuli on the Budaiya road are therefore as interesting as those to the south, in the Aali group, and are well worth a visit. Also on the north side of the road is a large mound believed to have been a temple of some sort; this can be distinguished by its large rooms and high protecting wall.

The third and smallest group of tombs is the group to the north of the Suq al-Khamis Mosque. While no detailed study has been made of these tumuli, the Manama Municipality, while collecting sand in this area, unearthed a tomb containing a small stone bowl with a simple circular design around the rim. According to the British Museum, this bowl dated from about 2500 B.C. and so it would seem that it has some connection with the granite bowl found near the Budaiya Road.

THE SUQ AL-KHAMIS MOSQUE AND BILAD AL-QADIM

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The oldest existing Moslem building in Bahrain and one of the most ancient Islamic relics in the Persian Gulf is the Suq al-Khamis Mosque, situated in the centre of the clearing about three miles from Manama on the road to Awali. Although its unusual twin minarets serve to identify it to the visitor, they are of comparatively recent construction and the ruined columns and walls within the low wall are all that remain of the ancient structure.

For many years the mosque has been slowly decaying, but in 1950 the Bahrain Government carried out some restoration work and the blocks and columns which for many years had lain in the sand were restored to their original position, the floor was cleared of the scrub growing there and it is now possible to obtain a better idea of the original shape and appearance of the mosque. Its former importance is shown by its careful construction from heavy columns and blocks hewn from Bahrain stone. There are few other ancient mosques in Bahrain which have been built with such care, most of them are simple erections of wood and mud, closely resembling the typical open mosques found, to this day, in Saudi Arabia.

The Suq al-Khamis Mosque differs from these other mosques in that it is of the more advanced courtyard type. The mosque itself is surrounded by an outer wall which was originally 27 by 30 yards but which is now slightly smaller. The interior of the mosque consists of three naves on each side of a central courtyard, the columns of the naves, which have been replaced by the Bahrain Government, are built from drum-shaped stones 1 ft. by 2 ft. and joined together with mortar. The pillar facades of the courtyard are still standing as they were built by the makers of the mosque. The Qibla (west) wall consists of broad pillars with half-column profiles and, according to Diez,[5] the strengthening wall of ragstone that can be seen at the base of the pillars and colums of the courtyard was erected when the mosque was rebuilt in the fifteenth century. The side walls of the courtyard are formed from double columns and the entrance or east wall of single columns. An interesting find that was made while the Bahrain Government was working on the mosque was of two graves below the east wall. The

graves were like those in the ancient graveyard nearby, they did not point towards Mecca as do Moslem graves, and so it would seem that the mosque was built on top of part of the ancient burial ground. The pillars and columns of the mosque were connected by keel-pointed arches and the ceiling was supported by two teak pillars 13 feet in height on the top of which rested a beam. The pillars and beam have been removed from the mosque and are in the possession of the Bahrain Government. It would seem that owing to the comparative weakness, of the pillars the roof can only have been made of some light material probably brushwood or palm-branches covered with earth.

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Diez states that when he visited the mosque, early in the century, there was a long inscription in the Qibla wall of the courtyard which showed that the mosque in its latest form was built in the year 740 A.H. (1339/40 A.D.). This tablet, together with some inscribed blocks which used to be above the Qibla wall, have fallen from their place and while some pieces of them are still in the possession of the Bahrain Government many have disappeared. These inscriptions and the square inscribed stone over the door of the western minaret are all of the same period, but it seems probable that the shorter inscription near the door of the minaret dates from the eleventh century A.D. At the feet of the pillars of the west wall of the courtyard are the remains of two Qibla stones. These have also fallen into disrepair since the visit of Diez, the top half of each stone has disappeared and the writer has been unable to trace them. The presence of these Qibla stones is unusual, only in the mosques of Ibn Tulun in Cairo and of the Prophet at Medina are they present. Qibla stones were used before the introduction of the mihrab niche to indicate the direction of prayer.

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The two Qibla stones bear inscriptions that show them to be of Shiite origin and so the mosque in its present form is a Shiite one. The inscription on a wooden pillar which once supported the roof and which has also disappeared, was of the same period and bore a similar inscription. The wooden pillars formerly in the mosque led Diez to ascribe the original mosque to the tenth or eleventh centuries A.D. It is interesting to note that wooden pillars of the same style and with the same ornamentation were found in the mosque at Samarra, in Iraq, which was founded by the Caliph al-Mu'tasim in 836 A.D. The mosque also had a school and a well attached to it, the traces of the latter can still be seen near the graves to the east of the mosque itself.

In the corner of Bilad al-Qadim nearest to the Suq al-Khamis mosque is another ancient inscription, in the mosque known as Masjid ar-Raf'ia. This is also a Qibla stone, set into the west wall of the mosque, but although it is in Kufic characters the work does not seem as fine as in the Kufic inscriptions in the Suq al-Khamis Mosque, possibly because this mosque was of less importance than the one at the Suq. The inscription bears the names of Muhammad, Ali, Fatima, Hussein and Hassan and is therefore also of Shiite origin. Bilad al-Qadim itself presents a sorry spectacle and with the exception of the

south-west corner the town is deserted and in ruins. Also on this plain is the Abu Zaidan Mosque, built over a spring of the same name. This mosque has recently been repaired by the Government and is much used by the Shia people of Manama, especially by the women during weddings.

To the north of the Budaiya Road is the ruined mosque of Abu Mahara, a strange little building with two storeys and a tall column in the centre of the spring. This mosque was built in the year 889 A.H. (1484 A.D.) as shown by an inscription to this effect in its west wall.

There are many other mosques in Bahrain, some of which contain inscriptions giving the date of their foundation, but they are of comparatively recent date and the mosques themselves are of no architectural interest.

THE FORTS OF BAHRAIN

Portuguese and Persians, Arabs and Omanis, all these have at one time or another attacked and occupied Bahrain and have retained control of the islands by the construction and garrisoning of forts and castles. The oldest surviving fort in Bahrain is the Qalat al-Ajaj, built by the Portuguese some time after their occupation of Bahrain in 1521. This fort lies on the northern shore of Bahrain Island some three miles from Manama and the easiest way to visit it is by driving along the Manama-Budaiya Road and then by turning off to the north when the ruins of the fort can be seen through the date palms.

On the sea shore below the fort can be seen the steps by which the Portuguese entered their boats, but with the exception of these remains there are no relics of the Portuguese in Bahrain. A number of cannon have been found, but there is a surprising absence of inscriptions, coins or gravestones.

The exact date of the construction of the fort is not known, but the fort was repaired in 1562 and 1586, this need for continual repair was no doubt due to the many revolts which took place in Bahrain against the Portuguese. Shaikh Khalifah an-Nabhani, in his history of Bahrain, mentions that he visited the fort and saw this latter date inscribed in four places on the walls of the fort, but today there is no sign of these inscriptions.

Page 62 shows a map of north Bahrain Island and Muharraq taken from a Portuguese book of the seventeenth century. It is interesting to see that whereas the Portuguese fort, in fact, has five sides, with square towers at four corners and a turret at the fifth, in the map the fort appears as square in shape while the moat is five-sided. The fort is at present in such a bad state of repair that it is almost impossible to discover the purposes of the various towers and chambers found in it, but an idea can be obtained of the great skill and care that went into the making of the walls by an examination of the towers and wall on the west side of the fort. The moat is no longer filled by the sea due to its neglect, although after the expulsion of the Portuguese the fort continued to be used by the Persian garrison in Bahrain.

A further examination of the map reveals that in the time of the

by Sunni Arabs who were prosperous when the pearling industry flourished but who depend today upon fishing, the oil company and transporting jus from Hawar for their living. In the summer the heat and the shortage of water (for although Jaw has a well it is brackish and more to the taste of the date palms that grow around it than to the people) drive most of the inhabitants to migrate to Sitra. Jaw was once spread some distance along the shore, as can be seen from the ruins that surround it, and in addition to having been a pearling centre it was inhabited by the people of Zubara when they wanted to escape the tyrannical rule of the Wahhabis in the 19th century. Jaw is the point on Bahrain nearest to Zubara and the Qatar coast, and for that reason it was always garrisoned when there was a threat to Bahrain from the mainland, but today the Police Camel Corps, which is stationed there, is to prevent the smuggling into Bahrain of Arabs from the Trucial Coast who come seeking work.

North of Jaw on the road to the Refinery is Asker and opposite it the island of Mushaikha, where an old tomb is the centre of pilgrimage for one of the Moslem sects, the Buharas. The interior of the tomb is filled with bottles of rose water, brought by pilgrims as offerings. Asker itself is a village much like Jaw and Dour.

JIDHAFS

We must now return to Manama and follow the other road that leads out of the town, this time in the direction of Budaiya. After passing through some miles of gardens the road reaches Jidhafs, a large village, which is also said to have been at one time the capital of Bahrain. Its inhabitants have a reputation for being enterprising and go-ahead, they have recently demonstrated this by deciding to build a club, the first in any of the villages, although in the towns there are many. Jidhafs contains one of the Shiite Juma Mosques and Friday Prayer is said there. It may seem strange that this should be a claim to fame, but according to Moslem custom only certain mosques are used for the Friday Prayers which is intended to encourage large congregations and to prevent the dispersal of the faithful in all the other mosques.

Like all the villagers, those of Jidhafs enjoy a visit to the town every now and then, and in the evenings bus loads of men and many cyclists can be seen coming in to town to enjoy themselves by going to the cinema or sitting gossiping with their friends in the coffee-shops to the blare of wireless music.

South of Jidhafs in the direction of Suq al-Khamis is the village of Ain al-Dar; although today it presents a quiet and peaceful appearance it was once the headquarters of a notorious gang of robbers who used a ruined house, inhabited by a lunatic, as a cache for storing their loot.

BUDAIYA

This strange town, on the north-western tip of Bahrain Island, is connected with Manama by a good motor road which runs through the village of Jidhafs. Budaiya used to be a large town, divided into Two quarters still spoken of as North and South Budaiya.

there is a deep depression surrounded by large blocks of stone which was once a great spring said to have irrigated much of north-western Bahrain. This spring, known as Ain Sejour, is traditionally associated with the name of the Caliph Abd al-Malik (685-705) who is reputed to have come to Bahrain with an army to chastise the people who had given refuge to politico-religious refugees from Iraq. According to local histories the Bahrainis worsted the invaders in a war by a clever use of the underground water channels and a truce was signed. Later the Caliph is said to have murdered the Bahraini leaders and to have filled in this well "to reduce the pride of the people of Bahrain," since then it has been dry and the land around it has reverted to desert. It seems unlikely that the Caliph himself came to Bahrain, he probably sent one of his generals and later tradition ascribed the leadership to the Caliph himself. 172

Several well-to-do families own houses in Diraz, and when pearling flourished its people were important nakhudas (captains) and pearl merchants. Many of the villagers are still divers and keep their boats on the shore near the little mosque north of Budaiya Garden. For use in these boats the villagers weave their own sail-cloth on local looms. 228 288 554

JESRA

On the edge of the open plain about 4 miles south of Budaiya is Jesra, the point where the pipeline from Arabia crosses to Bahrain, here also is a village whose Arab inhabitants are mainly retainers of the Ruling Family. Several Shaikhs have also built substantial houses in the village, as well as gardens irrigated from artesian wells. Another road leads from Jesra to Rifaa al-Gharbi, following the route of the pipeline across the desert. 315 361 491

MALAKIYA

Four miles south of Jesra the road, after passing through the villages of Karzakan and Dumistan, enters the little village of Malakiya, set in the centre of thriving date gardens, some of which belong to merchants in Manama. The only claim to interest in this village is a large tomb which is held in great veneration by the Shia community of Bahrain and is visited by pilgrims from all parts of the Islands. The tomb is of a certain Amir Zaid, but there is some difference of opinion about his identity. Some contend that he was Zaid bin Sohan, one of the Companions of the Prophet, but according to other local authorities he was a certain Amir Zaid bin Umaira al-Abdi who witnessed a covenant of truce made between the people of the Islands and al-Mua'lla bin al-Hadrami, the Moslem conqueror of Bahrain. A third version is that the worthy Amir was the leader of the people of Bahrain in a war that took place between them and the Caliph Abd al-Malik (See paragraph on Diraz). It has not yet been decided which of these versions is in fact the true one, but this does not deter Shia pilgrims from visiting Malakiya. 361 778

1: Belgrave F-3 (no date) 1953 MZ2 Bahrain MZ2

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A roadside Mosque. Photo : *Sir Charles Belgrave.*

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A Qanat (Water Channel) Photo : *The Author.*